



THE

KNIGHT



Vol. III No. 6 Issue #18 The Lithuanian Numismatic Association April-May 1981 \$2.00

We now begin as a regular feature an educational series about Lithuanian military orders/decorations and medals. Compiled by Lithuanian orders expert Henry L. Gaidis of Olney, Maryland, this is the first attempt to present an exhaustive study of the subject in the English language, and is the result of many hours of research and translation work. Collectors in this field will want to notify other collectors of Lithuanian military items of this unique series.

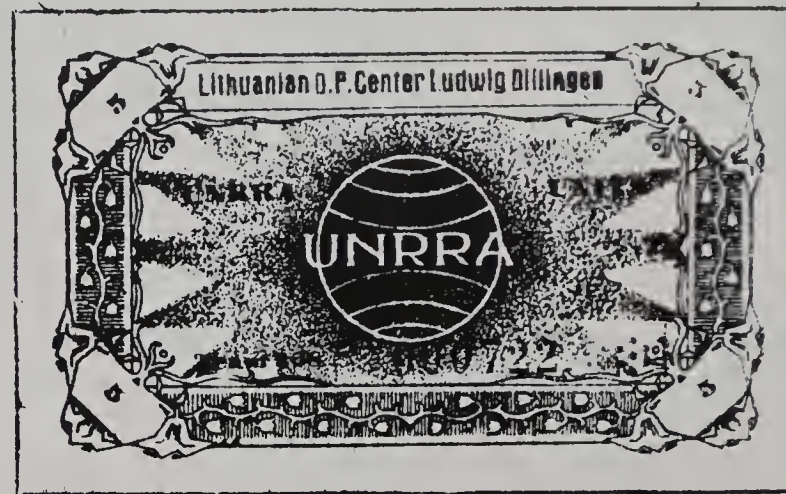
VIRTUTI MILITARI

BY HENRY L. GAIDIS



The Order of the Virtuti Militari was established on June 18, 1792 on the orders of the last King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski (1763-1795), following the defeat of the Russian forces at the Battle of Zielence. This decoration was established on the recommendation of his nephew, Prince Jozef Poniatowski, to honor soldiers for exceptional military deeds of valor in excess of duty on the battlefield. The medal was first struck at the Royal Warsaw Mint in the two classes of gold and silver. The first medals were oval (illustrated above) and bore on the obverse the Royal Monogram S.A.R. (Stanislaus Augustus Rex) with a crown and crossed laurel branches. The inscription VIRTUTI MILITARI appears on the reverse with laurel branches. There were 65 medals awarded during the 1792 campaign (Second Partition) and tradition indi-

Continued on page 4.....



UNRRA D.P. CAMP MONEY

BY J. KREIVENAS

Originally published in Lithuanian in 1968 in the Filatelisty Draugijos Lietuva Biuletenis (Chicago). Translated 1980 by A. Radzius, Jr. of Baltimore, Maryland.

Although I did not hear about any other issues, two UNRRA camps in Germany had their own money. This "money" true, was not based on gold, but nonetheless was valuable in Germany at that time, especially to purchase American cigarettes. UNRRA money could be earned by working UNRRA assigned tasks and then from the same office items could be purchased.

To my knowledge, of the Lith. camps, Bad Worishofen and Ludwig-Dillingen had their own currency.

I. Bad Worishofen. This camp's money was printed on white paper on one side. The UNRRA currency was called "units" and B.A. notes were in 1, 5, and 20 unit denominations. The size of all notes were 110 mm. long and 76 mm. wide, and were printed in two colors. They were printed by Hans Holzmann, in B.W., in July of 1946. 15,000 examples of each denomination were issued.

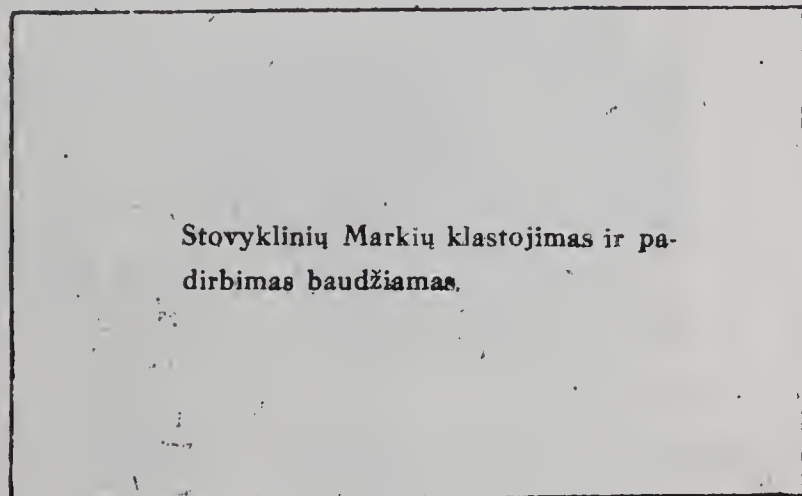
The background for each of the 3 denominations is the same design: A stylized leaf frame in the middle of which is "UNRRA," and on the bottom in small letters on the outside of the frame: the trademark of the printer. The background of the 1 unit is yellow; the 5--violet; the 20--blue/green. On all is printed in red the following text: "D.P. CENTER BAD WORISHOFEN UNRRA, 1 UNIT TEAM 558."

Continued on page 2.....

2. CAMP MONEY Con't from pg. 1

The number denoting the denomination is repeated on each corner. The serial number is 6 digits, with a star made of 6 dots. Numbers did not begin with 0.

II. Ludwig-Dillingen. The money used at this camp consists of 2 issues: the first was issued in white paper, and the second, violet. The denominations are as follows: 1, 2, 5, 10, and 50 units. The appearance is very similar to the Bad Worishofen notes.



The background color with the denomination is green in both issues. The design is somewhat more appealing than that of Bad Worishofen. In the middle of the background in clear white letters is written "UNRRA." The text reads, "LITHUANIAN D.P. CENTER LUDWIG DILLENGEN UNRRA UNITS TEAM 308." And with the red color (as the text) is printed the numerical value of the denomination in each corner. On the bottom right, is a 6 digit serial number and a star made of 6 dots. On these notes the serial number sequence for each denomination begins with 000000.

On the reverse of the Dillingen notes (pictured above) there is printed the text with translates: The Falsification and Counterfeiting of Camp Marks is Punishable." The 1, 2, and 5 units are 80.5 mm X 56 mm., and the 10 and 50 unit notes 112 mm. X 68 mm. in size.

With a rising interest among philatelists for Red Cross and scout issued seals, there is no reason not to take into the company of these seals of the UNRRA money, which carry even the name of Lithuania and which call attention to the L. language. There is no reason to believe that in the future Lithuanians and many others will not be interested in them. During their term of usage, these "banknotes" were quite easily obtainable. Maybe people who lived in the B.W. and L.-D. camps still have some of them. Finally, I'm not sure that the notes described here comprise the totality and that there were not more. [Editors note: of course now the Scheinfeld D.P. money has appeared. Do our readers know of any other Lithuanian camp money in existence?]

DEALERS! Advertising rates "Business Card" insertion (as Karl Stephens ad at right) \$5 per issue, or \$25 for contract 6 issues. Advertise your Baltic stock here!

C.I.C.F. REPORT

The Chicago International Coin Fair held on March 13-15 saw 7 Lithuanian collectors at the door at 10 AM on opening day, who fanned out among the dealers hoping to find items for their collections. Unlike last year when the pickings were excellent, the selection of Lithuanian material was substantially down. Still, there were a few surprises which caught the eyes of the alert ones.

Purchased from a foreign dealer was a unif-ace and off-color printers proof of the reverse of the 1924 1,000 Litu banknote. This proof contained no watermark in the oval, and bore a brown printing, bringing out the design much better and clearer than in the regular circulation issue. Also offered for sale was a 500 litu note (\$450) which was not sold, and a circulation 1,000 Litu note which was priced outrageously at \$1,450 (which was not sold).

Our LNA meeting on Sunday attracted 9 persons who were greeted with Lith. poppy-seed bread, purchased from the Baltic bakery on 69th St. Speaker was T.K. editor Frank Passic who presented a slide series on Lith. currency, from the Balzekas Museum.

The major coin publications Coin World and World Coin News were there, and helped us in dis-tributing free Lith. "trends" to visitors. Krause publications photographed our Lith. banknotes and coins for future use in their paper and catalog books.

Coin World presented in its March 18, 1981 issue pages 155, 56, and 159 a short section English translation of Jonas K. Karys' 1959 Ancient Lith. Money, which we have been presenting here in T.K. The article focused on the satirical 3 grašis coin of 1565, in which the Lithuanians expressed their nationalism, to the ire of the Poles.

It was learned that our long-time friend at C.W., David T. Alexander (our speaker at our very first meeting) is leaving C.W. and has taken a position with the numismatic firm of Jensen & Jensen, specialists in medals. We wish Dave the best of success, and hope he comes across some Petras Rimša medals...

Coin World reported on our LNA meeting in its April 1, 1981 issue, entitled "Passic provides high point at C.I.C.F." on Pg. 83. Write C.W. for a copy of this. P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45367.



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(Pp. Adv.)

1918-19 BOLSHEVIK CURRENCY FROM PANEVĖŽYS

(Historical summary from the Encyclopedia Lituanica Vol. 1, Pgs. 567-568:)

"After Germany and Russia signed the peace of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918, many evacuated Lithuanians began to return to their homeland from Russia. An attempt was made to use some of them as vehicles for expanding the communist movement.

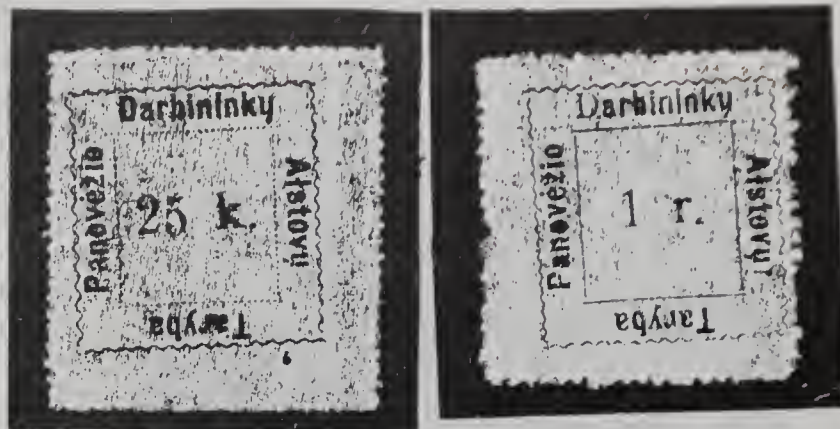
A sizeable communist infiltration into Lithuania first became possible at the end of 1918, when the German army began to retreat from Lithuania. In the wake of the retreating German forces the Red Army of the Bolsheviks occupied the eastern part of Lithuania and on December 22, 1918, on orders from Moscow, a newly created Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was proclaimed. The Red Army was able to occupy nearly half the territory of Lithuania for a few months, and this was the extent of the authority of the communists of "Lithuania-Belorussia". The recently organized Lithuanian army not only succeeded in containing the Red Army's advance but also expelled it completely from Lithuanian territory by the fall of 1919."

In the region around the city of Panevėžys, the local communists "circulated" in the area small stamped-size currency, printed on very crude paper, in denominations of 25 and 50 kopeks, 1, 3, and 5 rubles. Of course they had no monetary backing, but were still used as currency in 1918-19 in the area.

Of this "money", Jonas K. Karys writes in his 1953 book, "In the period 1918-19, the Workers Delegates Council of Panevėžys, in the spirit of and operating as Lenin's revolutionaries should, showed up with its paper "ruble" and "kopeks," bringing an additional amount of disorder in the town and nearby countryside. This money was circulated only when the payor held these paper notes in one hand, and in the other: a revolver cocked to shoot...! Of course with these bills the Bolshevik would "purchase" the citizen's cow, horse, wagon, etc..."

Each note contains a double lined square, in which between each of the lines in each direction appears a word: "Panevėžio Darbininkų Atstovų Taryba," which translates: "Panevėžys Workers Delegates Council." In the center is the denomination figure, and "K." for "kopek," or "r." for "ruble."

It should be noted that while very crude and in no way resembling the more elaborate communist money which was issued in neighboring Latvia during this period, this money from Panevėžys does reflect a bonafide currency issue from Lithuania. This money is listed by several catalogers, including Karys, Platbarzdis, Keller, etc. However, it is not presently included in Pick, but it should be. On page 701 of the present Pick catalog, we see listed the Riga Workers Deputies Soviet notes. If Pick sees fit to list the local Latvian communist money, then why aren't the local Lithuanian notes from Panevėžys



listed in the Lithuanian section? Unfair! There should be consistency.

At the recent C.I.C.F., Kraus publications (which publishes the Pick book) took pictures of the above notes, and it is hoped that there will be an "update" to include these in.

In VG condition these notes retail for around \$45; in VF for \$60, and XF for \$75. The 3 and 5 rubles however are rare, and fetch around \$75 for VG, \$100 in VF, and \$125 in XF. This Panevėžys money seldom appears on the numismatic market.



Panevėžys is Lithuania's 5th largest city and is an important industrial center. It was first settled in 1503 when a church was constructed there. During independent Lithuania it contained the largest soap factory in the country, a large meat processing plant, and one of the largest gristmills in the Baltic area. During WWII many Lithuanians were murdered or deported by the Germans & Russians.

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4. VIRTUTI MILITARI

Continued from page 1...



OBVERSE

cates that the first medal was presented to General Tadas Kosciuszka (Thaddeus Kosciuszko), who was a Lithuanian.

The oval medal was shortly thereafter replaced by an 8-pointed Maltese Cross of precious metal worn with a light blue ribbon with a black strip on each edge. The obverse (photo lower left below, courtesy of Juozas Augustinus, Chicago, Ill, LNA member) of the cross arms bore the inscription, "VIR-TUTI-MILI-TARI" in black enamel and its center contained a white enamel Polish eagle with crown, orb, and sceptre surrounded by a laurel wreath. The reverse cross arms bore the king's initials "S.A.R.P." (Stanislaus Augustus Rex Polonia) and its center bore an enamel green or black Lithuanian Vytis (knight) and the date "1792" surrounded by a wreath. (Photo below) The crosses were



REVERSE

hand-wrought both then and later and made at the order and expense of the recipient. This individual manufacture accounts for the great variety in detail of crosses encountered. It is further noted that Lithuanian recipients frequently had their crosses made with the Vytis on the obverse and the Polish eagle on the reverse to show their nationality.

When the cross form of the Order of Virtuti Militari was introduced it was divided into 5 classes. The 1st class decoration (Grand Cross of the Order) was worn on a right shoulder sash with an 8-pointed Breast-Star emblem embroidered in silk thread and sequins or wrought in precious metals on the left breast. The 2nd class order (Commander's

(Continued on next page.....)

Cross) was worn from a neck ribbon with the Breast-Star on the left. The third class medal (Knight's Cross) was worn around the neck, but without the Breast-Star. The fourth (Officer's Cross) and fifth class (Knight's Cross) were worn with ribbons on the left breast and made in gold and silver respectively.

During the reign of King Stanislaus Augustus 85 gold medals and crosses, and 440 silver medals and crosses were awarded to various officers and soldiers in the Polish/Lithuanian armies. Only Prince Jozef Poniatowski was awarded the Commander's Cross. With the Third partition and occupation of Russian forces, the decoration was outlawed and wearing it meant severe punishment.

The decoration was not re-established during the Kosciuska Insurrection of 1794, as he refused to adopt a decoration established by King Stanislaus Augustus whom he strongly opposed. Kosciuska is known to have awarded gold rings for bravery in lieu of the cross, bearing the Polish inscription inside which stated, "The Country to Her Defender" (photo below).



With Napoleon's creation of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1806 under Saxon King Frederick Augustus, the Order was re-established in its traditional design, but without the sovereign's initials. In 1808, Russian Czar Alexander I demanded that the Arms of Lithuania (Vytis) be removed from the decoration in as much as the country was under his rule at that time. Frederick ordered the Lithuania Vytis be removed and be replaced with an inscription "REX ET PATRIA." The military refused to accept this alteration and continued to wear the Order in its original design. During the period of the Duchy of Warsaw three collective presentation of awards were held: 1808 and 1809 for the Austrian Campaign, and in 1812 for the Russian Campaign. In all, 1506 soldiers and officers were awarded the decoration by the Duchy which included many Lithuanians fighting to restore independence to their homeland. During the time

of the Kingdom of Poland (1815-1830) the cross without the Vytis was awarded to officers and soldiers who had served with bravery during the 1812 and 1813 Campaigns in either the Russian or French service.

With the November 1831 Insurrection the arms of Lithuania was again restored to the decoration. A total of 3863 officers and soldiers were awarded the Virtuti Militari between March 3, 1831, and October 4, 1831 for service against Russia. With the suppression of the 1831 Insurrection, Czar Nicholas I ordered the decoration be awarded as a memorial badge to all Russian troops who had fought against the Polish and Lithuanian rebels. He ordered over 110,000 medals manufactured without the Vytis and bearing the motto "REX ET PATRIA" and dated 1831. This decoration was issued to downgrade the great respect with which it was held by the Poles and Lithuanians. It is also noted that Grodno (Gardinas) Hussar Regiment of the Russian Imperial Guard was authorized to wear the cross with Vytis and inscription "VIRTUTI MILITARI" as their regimental breast badge until the 1917 Revolution.

With the restoration of independence to Poland and Lithuania in WWI, Poland restored the Virtuti Militari to its military. The restored decoration followed the traditional design, but the reverse with the Vytis was replaced by the initials "R.P." (Republic of Poland) and the inscription, "HONOR I OJCZYZNA" (Honor and Country) placed around the obverse eagle. This decoration continues to be awarded under the Polish communist government in its traditional pattern, with only the crown being removed from the eagle's head. The Lithuanian Republic in a continued attempt to divest itself of Polish influence refused to adopt the V.M. and instead authorized a new decoration: the Cross of Vytis [This decoration will be dealt with in a future issue of The Knight]. Both the V.M. and the C. of V. are awarded to the bravest of the brave in a combat situation.

Pictured at right: General Tadas Kosciuska, who was awarded the first V.M. medal in 1792. (oval medal on strap)



6. QUIZ ANSWERS (From last Issue Pg. 8)

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. F | <u>Answers right</u> |
| 2. V | |
| 3. O | 17 or more: You've been with us |
| 4. FF | since the beginning and like to |
| 5. GG | read and learn. Good work! |
| 6. D | |
| 7. EE | 14-16: Read <u>The Knight</u> closer from |
| 8. W | now on. |
| 9. G | |
| 10. II | 11-13: We welcome our new members. |
| 11. M | |
| 12. JJ | 11 or less: Copies of the Lithua- |
| 14. J | nian to English (or vice-versa) |
| 15. KK | dictionary are available at the |
| 16. HH | Balzėkas Museum in Chicago... |
| 17. BB | |
| 18. Q | And guess what---we forgot to include |
| 19. Z | an answer to question <u>13</u> which shou- |
| 20. MM | ld have been "Jonas K. Karys." Oh |

well, hope you didn't lose any sleep over that one!....

HANK GAIDIS' GUN ARTICLE

LNA member and orders/decorations expert Henry L. Gaidis has had published in the January 1981 issue of the Gun Report an excellent article entitled Lithuanian Military Arms. This deals with the various types of guns and weapons used by the Lith. army at various stages during the independence period.

Gaidis filled the article with Lithuanian history, so non-Lith. readers would become familiar with the importance of Lithuania in the hobby world. Of interest to numismatics is the picture of the Lith. 5 litai coin of 1925, and the 1569 4-grašiu, which illustrated the Lith. national symbol, Vytis.

The Gun Report is published monthly and the January issue costs \$2. For a copy write: P.O. Box 111, Alledo, Illinois 61231.

LETTERS

Our sincere thanks for the nice word about the IBNS in the current issue of T.K. While I do not collect coins at all and Lith. paper money less than in depth, I do read every issue of your journal and find it extremely interesting and informative. It is a pleasure to add such a fine publication to my library. Again my thanks for your interest in IBNS and with best wishes.

---Ruth Hill, St. Louis, Missouri.

WANT-ADS

Has the market dried up? If you NEED anything for your Lithuanian collection OR have items for SALE or TRADE: have us list them HERE! We've got over 100 members and chances are good you'll get what you need or sell what you have! This is a FREE service to LNA members (non-dealer sales)! Take advantage of it! Write today!

MEET THE SIGNER

This month we acquaint you with the man behind the signature on 2 Lithuanian banknotes: Vladas Stašinskas, president of the bank of Lithuania.

Born on October 10, 1874 in Dameliai, he completed legal studies at Moscow University in 1902 and set up private practice in Kaunas. Elected to the 2nd Russian Duma in 1906, he took this opportunity to advocate Lithuanian causes.

LIETUVOS BANKAS THE BANK OF LITHUANIA



VLADAS STAŠINSKAS
Lietuvos Banko Varystas

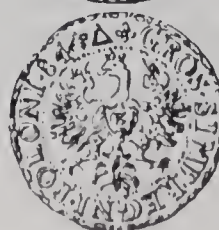
When Lithuania's independence was re-established in 1918, he served as minister of Internal Affairs. He became State Comptroller by the 2nd Lith. cabinet, but was arrested by the invading Bolsheviks when they overran Vilnius in January of 1919.

After being imprisoned until mid-summer of 1919, he returned to Kaunas and set up legal practice and served as consultant to various public agencies, and was chairman of the Lith. Lawyers Council.

Stašinskas served as president of the bank of Lithuania from 1930 to 1938, and after that as a minister of justice in 1938. He died in Kėdainiai on March 11, 1944.

The signature of Stašinskas appears on the 20 Litu banknote (P-27) of 1930, and on the rare 1938 10 Litu (P-28) specimen note. In an interesting sidelight, Stašinskas kept numerous Lithuanian specimen banknotes and rare pattern test strike coins in his home in a trunk. His son, Vytautas, became Lithuanian Consulate General in New York, who supplied Jonas K. Karys with much material for his 1953 book!

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Dear Members:

In the past year we have seen dramatic increases in our 3rd class postage rate, from 28¢ to 40¢ (when we began the Karys 1959 book translation), and now to 69¢ for each issue (due to the U.S. postage increase). In addition, the Karys 1959 translation meant adding brown envelopes (costing us 10¢ each) and heavier postage weight to our costs.

Each issue of The Knight contains 8 pages of news and articles, plus 30 pages of exclusive translation work, which you cannot get anywhere else. Multiply that by 6 issues, and you see that by being a member of the LNA, you get 228 pages of material each year, all for a low price! (The Karys book alone would cost you at least \$25)

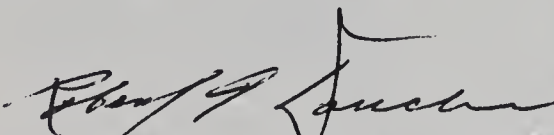
Although we are non-profit and have accepted advertising, we must raise the subscription/membership donation for the following year. The price for a U.S. or Canadian subscription donation will be \$10. \$1.86 of that \$2 increase is for postage alone.

For those resideing overseas, the price of postage alone for airmail is now \$2.08 each issue. Therefore, we are asking those in this catagory (Europe, Australia, etc) to include an extra \$10 to help take care of this, meaning a donation of \$20 or more (U.S. funds) for overseas subscriptions.

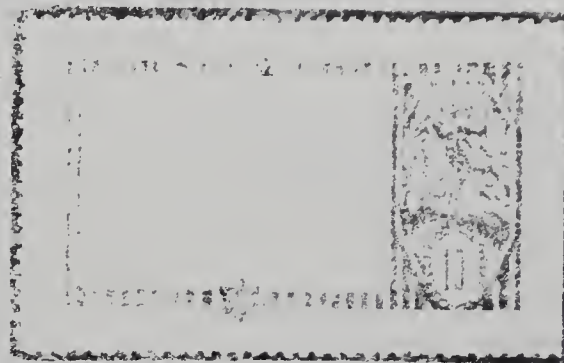
Our treasury is just und \$100, which is not enough to absorb the expected costs for the following year. We feel we've kept costs down and are only raising the price as a necessary measure.

All subscription/memberships are now due for everyone. Please fill in and cut out the form below and send it in promptly. Note: we are now OUT of back issues for Vols. I and II.

Ačių


Robert J. Donchis, DIRECTOR

WHAZZIT?



Last month we came across an item which has been puzzling us and which we hope our readers know something about. Pictured alleged "Jewish Revenue First Aid" stamps, bearing the date of "1912", and with the Lithuanian Vytis on the right. According to the tale we were told, these were supposedly used in Vilnius, where of course a big percentage of the population was Jewish.

Have any of our members who know about Lithuanian revenue stamps ever seen these? In the center is a photograph of a horse drawn wagon. At the bottom center is an ornate "Star of David" symbol. The picture and denomination figure is in purple (10 kopek), and red (20 kopek), with the rest in gray. The reverse side is gummed.

We showed these to several persons in Chicago and the comment was that it was hard to imagine this kind of semi-glowwy printing being done in Vilnius in 1912. Whatever the case, we need to know about these, and would appreciate our members checking around with old-time Lithuanians and stamp collectors who possibly might have an answer. Good luck, and we'll be waiting for an answer.

BRIDGES

The January 1981 issue of the informative Lithuanian-American newsletter "Bridges" is now out, and features on page 5 an article about the L.N.A. and the A.N.A. convention last August in which a Lithuanian coin exhibit took 1st place.

Bridges is printed in English and is a must for those wishing to keep up with news concerning Lithuania and Lithuanians, both here in the U.S. and around the world.

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Prepaid 81-82

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 Alex. Radzius, Jr.

This is our family of collectors of Lithuanian numismatics! If you would like to contact any of them just write to them in care of us, and we'll forward the unopened letter to them.

FLASH!

At press time word has reached us that a major article about Lith. numismatics will appear in the May 1981 issue of The Numismatist, official publication of the American Numismatic Association, about the Lith-American lodge tokens of Chicago. Watch for it!

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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But the Prague groshes, as we have already mentioned, began to lighten steadily, and at the same time its silver content decreased. Always poorer and poorer groshes flowed into Lithuania through channels of intensified trade. The merchants knew what they were doing. They brushed from their own hands the lighter, debased silver coins as soon as they could, which coins remained in circulation until they were forced out by more imperfect coins. It was not easy to distinguish this phenomenon. It was only after a longer interval that it became clear to Lithuanians that 60 melted groshes were not really worth a long kapa, which still weighed about 200 grams and ordinarily contained about 0.900 of silver metal. Thus, 60 groshes proved insufficient for melting into that kapa. So when melting or when counting separate groshes, they now began to equate the long kapa to 100 Prague groshes. Such a standard of the long kapa with groshes was stabilized between the end of the 14th century and the middle of the 15th.

The stability of the long kapa and the foundering of the grašis are testified to by the Crzcow "stock exchange" and documents surviving from those ages. For instance: Poles had collected bags full of the chops and valued them so highly that on August 13, 1394, the long kapa price had reached up to 120 grašiai in Cracow¹⁰⁵. In the Polish coin mint, from one of our kapos, there were struck two "grzywnos," Polish denars. Jogaila, having borrowed 500 long kapos from Vytautas in 1417 (called "siklas" in the document), himself officially conceded their par value to be about 100 grašiai (and promised to pay at 96 grašiai). However, it is evident that, holding to round figures, the long kapa as a general rule was equated to 100 of the current Prague groshes, as we see in the bond agreement¹⁰⁶ preserved from 1431 at Staklišķiai (Alytus Province).

In 1415, the religious reformer of Czechia, John Huss, was summoned to the Church Council of Constance, and was there condemned, and burned at the stake. This shocking event caused massive discontent in Czechia, and exploded into the so-called Hussite insurrection. The striking of the Prague groshes was interrupted for a time. However Czech money cleaving to Lithuania, continued to play its accustomed role further. Only at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, new coins of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania began to be struck, and they eased the Prague grosh to one side. And in 1535, the appearance of Sigismundus the Elder's grosh in a single coin, finally cut the roots of that foreign coin out of the soil of Lithuania's money.

¹⁰⁵Numizmat. Lit., page 30.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

Lithuanian money, while attempting to supplant, and finally supplanting the Czech grosh, was grouped in the same 60 groshes to the kapa, as customary with the early Prague grosh and our own melted kapa relationship. That grouping and reckoning continued in the country until Russian money became dominant here: the "ruble," and that monetary unit's hundredth part, the "kopek" (in Lithuanian, kapeika). Finally, on February 25, 1825, by virtue of the Czar's "ukaz," groshes and their kapos were officially suppressed. In concluding old contracts, making payments upon effective agreements, or interpreting stated sums in government regulations, the grosh must be substituted or exchanged by 2 kopeks, and the kapa by 1 ruble and 20 kopeks (in silver).

The Czech coins discussed here appeared in Poland even earlier than they did in Lithuania. Comparing them in the commercial sense with their own silver unit "grzywna," Poles concluded that 1 "grzywna" would equal 48 Prague groshes. This standard of theirs was accepted there in practice, and later was applied to their own grosz. During the reign of King Jogaila [up to 1434], the 48 unit group reckoning spilled over into Lithuania. But in Lithuania there had already been established the 60 grosh kapa, equalling, as we have seen, the silver long kapa. Calling this latter also a "grzywna," the Poles administered it on a par with their own. However, naming them both grašis or groshes; one was specified as the "Lithuanian reckoning" (60), and the other as the "Polish and/or Cracow reckoning (48)." For example, in 1397, Jogaila and Vytautas set the annual emolument for the Bishop of Vilnius at 200 "grzywna" silver, "Polish reckoning" at 48 groshes. Borrowing the 500 Lithuanian long kapos from Vytautas in 1417, Jogaila agreed to return 1000 "grzywnas" of the "Polish reckoning" (at 48 groshes). Švitrigaila, setting the 1424 taxes for the village of Kosov, selects the "Polish grosh" with the "Cracow reckoning." (48)¹⁰⁷

Still, this Polish grouping of the Prague grosh did not disturb the Lithuanian grouping of 60 units to the kapa [lit: chop], and it dominated the Czech as well as our own grašis reckoning until the end. True, even without the incidents mentioned, during the era of the joint rule of Lithuania and Poland, at times there would occur in our country incidents of Polish (48) group unit of reckoning money, but that had no effect upon local money reckoning. And as a safeguard

¹⁰⁷ From "Numizmat. Litewska," pages 28-31.

against any type of misunderstanding, when necessary, Lithuania's documents would specify its own group unit: "x kapos grašis, Lithuania reckoning," "x kapos grašis, by Grand Duchy of Lithuania's reckoning;" "x Lithuanian kapos of 60 Lithuanian grašis," and similar wording.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Examples, Historical Sources, I, pages 181, 186, 187, etc.

— O —

[The following biography of Grand Duke Gediminas is presented in order to get a better understanding of the Chronological succession of Lithuanian Grand Dukes and Polish kings; in addition this gives clarity to understanding the circulation arena of Lithuania's early coins, and of the geographical influence of Lithuania's neighbors. The biography is from the Encyclopedia Lituanica (English version) Vol. II (D-J) Pgs. 287-293]]

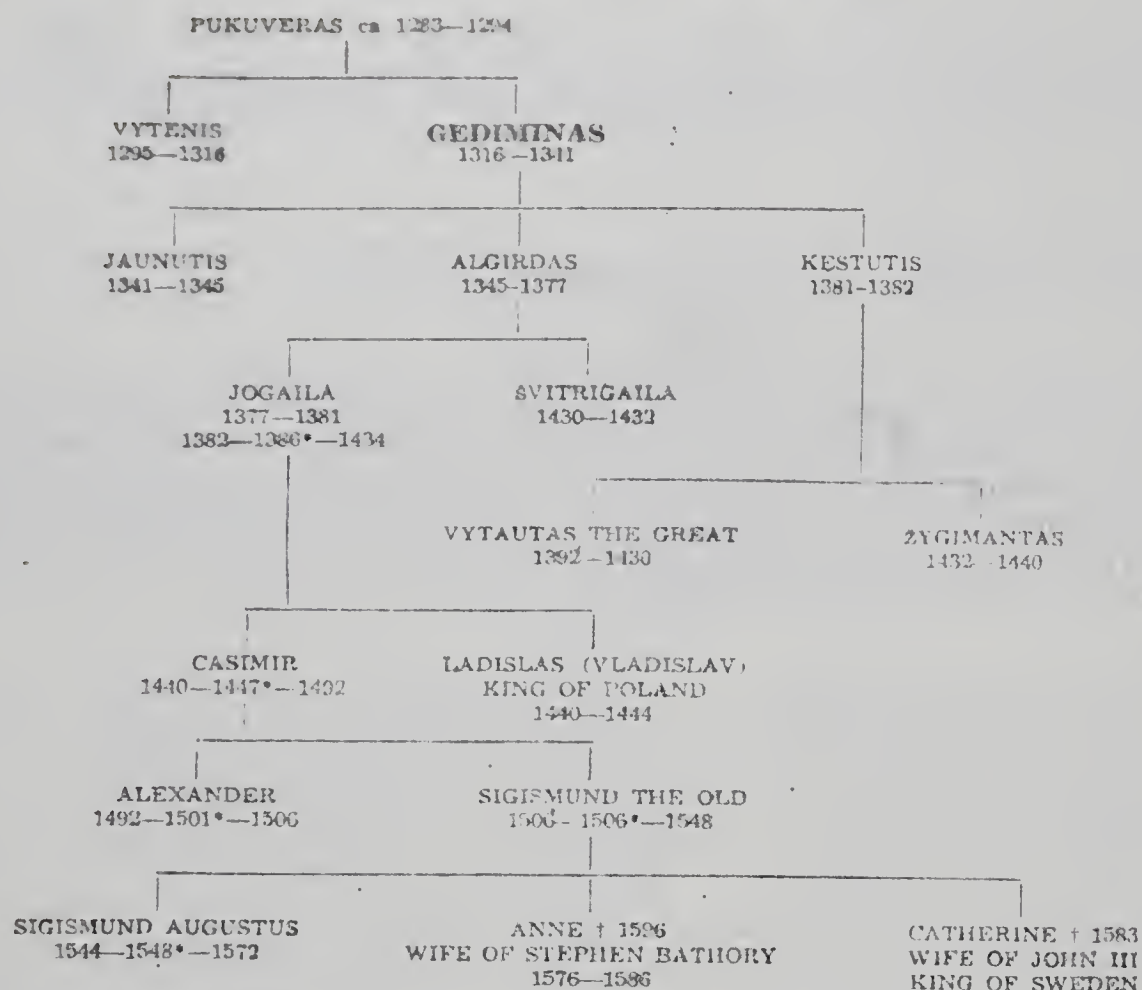
GEDIMINAS (ca 1275-1341), Grand Prince of Lithuania (1316-1341), successor to his brother Vytenis (1295-1316). He is mentioned as king, the highest title given to a sovereign ruler of Western Europe, by the sources of the Teutonic Order and in correspondence with western addressees. Gediminas started the permanent dynasty of Lithuanian rulers which lasted almost 300 years. The dynasty was descended from Pukuveras, the father of Vytenis and Gediminas. The chronicler Peter von Dusburg refers to Pukuveras as king (*rex Lettonie*), but does not give any particulars of his reign. A Lithuanian legend, dating from the 16th century, credited the Gediminians as having descended from the Roman Columnus (*Column*) clan that settled originally in Samogitia or Western Lithuania. This fabricated genealogy (q.v.) of Lithuanian rulers is reflected in the older historical literature, which tried to prove the origins of the Gediminians family as coming from Samogitia. Recent historical research shows them to have come from the Highland (Aukštaitija) or east central Lithuania, where according to historical sources of the 14th century were located the royal manors (*königes hof*) of the Gediminians. At the end of the 13th century this whole region was known as the "land of the Lithuanian king." The region formed the nucleus of the Lithuanian nation and there from the time of Gediminas was the permanent capital city of Lithuania, Vilnius.

Letters of Gediminas. Early in his reign Gediminas became well known in Western Europe through his letters, written in 1322-1325. They were related to his efforts to stop the aggression of the Teutonic Order by diplomatic means. His brother Vytenis had tried to take advantage of the internal quarrels in Livonia, forming an alliance with the bishop of Riga and the city of Riga against the Order.

This alliance lasted until 1313, when the Order formed a peace treaty with the city of Riga and forced it to break its friendly relations with the Lithuanians. However, the alliance was renewed again by Gediminas about 1322. The letters of Gediminas appeared in connection with this treaty.

Copies of six letters survive; the contents of the seventh are recounted in a papal bull. One letter was written to Pope John XXII at an unknown date; it is thought that the extant copy was written in 1322. One letter written on Jan. 25, 1323 was addressed to all Christians (*universis christianis*), especially to certain large cities of Germany. Three letters dated May 26, 1323 were addressed to the Dominicans and Franciscans of the province of Saxony, as well as to several cities of the Hanseatic League. Finally, one letter dated June 2, 1325 was sent to the bishops of Tallinn and Tartu, to the city of Riga, and to the Danish governor of Estonia. Three main things were emphasized in these letters: the promise of Gediminas to be baptized and the great respect expressed to the Pope, invitation to foreigners to settle in Lithuania, and indictment of the Teutonic Order on the charge that it prevented the christianization of Lithuania. This accusation, repeated in almost all the letters, has raised doubts about their authenticity. It was thought that they were spread by the opponents of the Order. However, the letters touch upon the domestic affairs of Lithuania, which would not have been of interest to outsiders forging them. In four of them, especially those addressed to the Hanseatic cities, were invitations to soldiers, tradesmen, various craftsmen and artisans, and even peasants and their families to come and settle in Lithuania. The farmers were promised free land and exemption from taxes for a period of 10 years. All were assured extensive protection, the right to return to their own coun-

THE HOUSE OF GEDIMINAS



* Indicates the year of election to the Polish throne.

try whenever they wished, and the privilege of conducting themselves in Lithuania according to the German Law of the city of Riga. Gediminas also invited bishops, priests and Dominican and Franciscan friars; he wrote that he had built two churches, one in Vilnius, "our royal city" (*in civitate nostra regia*), and the other in Nau-gardukas (Novogrudok). When representatives of Livonia arrived in Vilnius to negotiate about baptism, Gediminas refused to discuss the matter pending the arrival of representatives from the Pope. On Oct. 2, 1323, the two countries made a treaty concerning only peace and trade.

Question of Baptism. In reply to the letters of Gediminas, Pope John XXII sent delegates to Lithuania. In June of 1324 Bishop Bartholomew and Abbot Bernard left for Riga. They were accompanied by Frederick (q.v.), the Archbishop of Riga, an ally of Gediminas who had lived for several years in Avignon, where the Pope resided at that time. Having arrived in Riga, the papal delegates sent their envoys to Vilnius to make sure that Gediminas really meant to carry out the baptism. There exists a detailed account by the envoys of what they found out in Vilnius. Gediminas answered their inquiries about baptism by replying that he had not asked anyone to write about the question. He had merely expressed rather, and still expressed great respect for the Pope, sought peace with the Christians, and did not forbid anyone in Lithuania to profess their faith: "I do not forbid the Christians to worship God according to the manner of

their faith, the Russians according to theirs, the Poles according to theirs, while we ourselves will worship God according to our customs: and we all have one God (*omnes habemus unum Deum*)". Since in one of his letters Gediminas had clearly stated his wish to be baptized, he now accused the Franciscan friar Berthold, who lived in Vilnius and wrote these letters in Latin, of not understanding the words of the ruler correctly. In reality, Gediminas refrained from baptism after he realized that in this manner he would not gain immunity from the attacks of the Order. The envoys of the Pope, who understood the situation, did not blame the ruler of Lithuania. Returning from Riga to Avignon, they urged him to keep the treaty of 1323 and the peace ratified by the Pope for at least 4 years. Archbishop Frederick put an interdict over the Teutonic Knights in 1325 for disrupting the christianization of Lithuania.

Struggle with the Order. Concurrent with the rise of the Gediminian dynasty, the Teutonic Order completed the conquest of Prussia and Livonia, and was thus in position to launch direct attacks upon Lithuania. One branch of the Order, which was established in Livonia, the Livonian Order, invaded the central areas of Lithuania, reaching as far as the outskirts of Vilnius. The second main branch, called the Knights of the Cross or the Prussian Order, stormed the western areas of Lithuania. The chronicles of the early reign of Gediminas mention frequent attacks of the Prussian Order along the rivers Nemunas and Dubysa. Sub-

ject to especially frequent attacks was the castle of Veliuona, the center of the Lithuanian defense for the entire lower Nemunas region. Gediminas not only stopped any further invasion of the enemy, but his army, led by the famous commander David, used to penetrate the internal regions of Prussia (1319). While fighting with the Livonian Order, Lithuanians used to reach the eastern regions of Estonia. Here Gediminas had the Russian city of Pskov as his ally. David was in command of the troops who fought against the Teutonic Knights in 1322-23. He was sent to Pskov by Gediminas at the request of the town itself. The city of Riga and the archbishop of Riga were his allies, as well as of his brother Vytenis. When Gediminas refused to be baptized, the Order used the fact for its own propaganda and as justification for new attacks. When the Livonian Order put pressure on the town of Riga, Lithuanians advanced into Livonia in 1329 and reached the northern environs of the city. This was the last time Gediminas intervened in the internal fighting of Livonia. When in 1330 the Teutonic Order forced the town of Riga to come under its rule, the treaty of Riga and its archbishop with Gediminas came to an end. However, Gediminas maintained the same boundary with Livonia (Latvia) that has remained until the present time. Only the territory of Zemgale was left outside this boundary. Gediminas called himself its ruler (*dux et princeps Semigalliae*). In 1338 a trade treaty was made with the Order and with Riga; it guaranteed free passage of the Daugava river and its tributaries.

Most of the fighting was concentrated around the Nemunas river, through whose valley the Prussian Order tried to reach the interior of Lithuania. After 1336 the attacks became more frequent. In that year the Order besieged the castle of Pilėnai (q.v.) on the Nemunas river. The dramatic episode of its defense is recorded in the chronicle of Wigand von Marburg (15th century). The defenders, unwilling to surrender, permitted themselves to be slain by their leader after setting fire to their castle. The Order was aided by crusaders and adventurers coming from Western Europe. Among them were the Bohemian King John of Luxemburg with his brother Charles (later Emperor Charles IV) in 1329, and Duke Henry of Bavaria in 1337. The latter's relation, Emperor Louis IV, in a lavishly decorated document (1337) deeded Lithuania to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order as to his vassal. This document, which did not have any practical repercussions, showed not only the special support given by the Emperor to the Order, but also revealed his own plans regarding Lithuania. During the crusade of 1337, in which Duke Henry of Bavaria was present, a castle was built and named Bayerburg after him near the Nemunas river. In the Latin text of the Wigand von Marburg chronicle it is noted that the "King of Trakai" was slain near that castle. The Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, probably basing his account on this note, wrote that Gediminas died in this manner; however, from the 1338 treaty with Livonia, it is known that Gediminas was still living in that year.

Relations with Poland. The Teutonic Order was the common enemy of Lithuania and Poland, a fact which naturally tended to unite the two countries. With Masuria, the northern principality of Poland which directly bordered on Lithuania, peaceful relations existed since the reign of Traidenis when in 1279 his daughter Gaudimantė married Prince Boleslas II. Around 1321

22 Gediminas gave his daughter Danutė in marriage to Prince Wacław of Masuria. When inviting new settlers from Western Europe, Gediminas advised them to travel through Masuria and to avoid the regions ruled by the Order. A formal treaty with Poland was proposed in 1325 and strengthened with ties of marriage. Aldona, the second daughter of Gediminas, married the Polish Prince Casimir, son of King Ladislas Łokietek. The following year Gediminas sent his army commander David with 1200 knights to support the Polish attack against the Margrave of Brandenburg. Repaying in kind, the King of Poland in 1329 attacked the lands of the Order when the Grand Master, together with King John of Bohemia, invaded Lithuania. In 1330 Lithuanians and Poles planned a unified attack on the Kulm region near the Vistula river, which was occupied



by the Germans. When the king of Poland did not appear, Gediminas felt betrayed; the relations between Lithuania and Poland deteriorated. They were resumed only by Jogaila, the grandson of Gediminas, when he became king of Poland in 1386.

Expansion to the East. At the time when Gediminas was fighting the Teutonic Order in the west, his lands in the east and in the south extended far beyond the ethnographical core of Lithuania. Sparsely populated by Slavic tribes, overgrown with forests, these lands exceeded Lithuania proper in area by several times. Gediminas had decided to annex all the Russian lands, but even while he had not yet accomplished it, he called himself the king of Lithuania and of many Russians (*rex lithuanorum et multorum ruthenorum*). He sought this goal by exploiting favorable circumstances in the east and through matrimonial agreements. At that time many independent Russian principalities still paid tribute to the Tatars. Trying to escape this subjugation, they willingly joined with Lithuania, which permitted them to keep their old internal rule and often even their rulers, after they had sworn loyalty to Gediminas. If a

Lithuanian ruler was appointed, he would adapt himself to local customs, language, and religion. In that manner, during the reign of Gediminas, his brother Theodore ruled the principality of Kiev, while his other brother Vainys

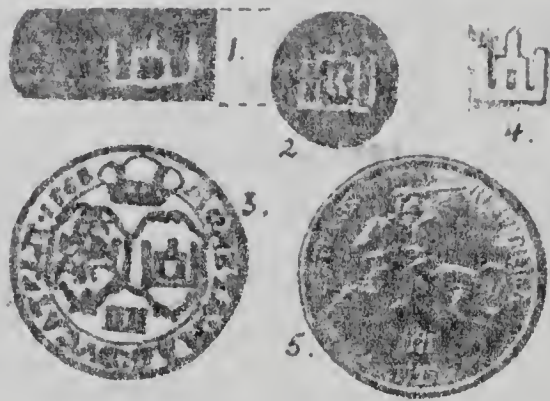
ruled the principality of Polotsk, which was annexed to Lithuania in the 13th century. The principality of Vitebsk was ruled by Algirdas, son of Gediminas, from about 1318-19. He had married its heir Maria. Another Maria, the daughter of Gediminas, married Dimitrii II, the prince of Tver'. The princes of Tver', who competed with Moscow for control of Russia, were dependable allies of Lithuania. Ivan, the prince of Smolensk, called Gediminas his elder brother, which according to the terminology of the Russian middle ages meant political dependence. In the northeast, the influence of Gediminas extended over the cities of Pskov and Novgorod. In 1322-23 Pskov was ruled by David, the commander-in-chief of Gediminas, and in 1333-36 by Norimantas, son of Gediminas. In the far southeast, the last Volynian prince, George II married Euphemia (Ofka), daughter of Gediminas in 1331, and kept in close contact with his father-in-law. Later Liubartas, another son of Gediminas, married the princess of Volynia and resided in Litsk. Even though the lands of the Russians exceeded in their area that of ethnographical Lithuania, Lithuania was not Western Russia, as some historians claim; rather the Russian principalities were annexed to the Lithuanian core, though they retained their own laws.

Structure of the State. Gediminas has been called true founder of the Lithuanian state. He completed the unification of the Lithuanian tribes that still existed after the attacks of their neighbors and had escaped subjection by the Teutonic Order. He also strove hard to organize his possessions into a viable political unit. It was a regional federation belonging to the family of Gediminas. Considering the country to be the property of his family, Gediminas proceeded to partition the state into six regions and entrust them to his sons. Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, including large surrounding regions, remained under the rule of Gediminas, and after his death came into possession of his seventh son Jaunutis. The Russian Chronicle of Novgorod notes that Gediminas died in the winter of 1341-42, but does not give any details.

Gediminas not only united, expanded, and defended the country. He was also concerned about raising its cultural level so that it would compare favorably with the West. Following the example of the rulers of Central Europe, he invited farmers to settle in the unpopulated regions. Tradesmen, artisans and soldiers were needed to strengthen the towns and castles and to defend the land. In his invitation to the craftsmen, Gediminas named ironworkers, silversmiths, carpenters, stonecutters, tanners, shoemakers, millers and bakers, salters, and ballisticians. It is not known how far artisans responded to his invitation. The plans of Gediminas to develop Lithuanian culture were hindered by intensive warfare with the Teutonic Order. Since the time of Gediminas, when it grew in political and military power, Lithuania became one of the greatest powers of East Central Europe. Having retained its own faith for a long time, it did not completely merge either with the Western or the Eastern world, but became the arena where these two worlds met and are still meeting in determining the fate of the Lithuanian nation.

Bibli.: K. Chodynicki, "Geneza dynastji Gedyminas," *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, Vol. 45, 1926; K. Forsireuter, "Die Bekehrung Gedimins und der Deutsche Orden," *Altpreussische Forschungen*, Vol. 5, 1928; A. Kučinskis, *Gedimino dinastijos kilmė*, Kaunas, 1934; J. Jakštas, "Vokiečių ordinas ir Lietuva Vytenio ir Gedimino metu," *Senovė* 1-11, Kaunas, 1935-36; —, "Naujausi Gedimino dinastijos kilmės tyrinėjimai," *Practica*, I, Kaunas, 1940; Z. Kaczmarczyk, *Kaczmarczyk Wielki*, Warszawa, 1948; V. Gidžiūnas, *Deatribus minoribus in Lithuania*, I, Rome, 1950; H. Paszkiewicz, *The Origin of Russia*, London, 1954; H. Spillet, *Die Briefe Gediminas*, Sinshelm, 1953; —, *Eine Quellenkritische Übersicht zu den Gediminsbriefen*, Sinshelm, 1959; V. T. Pashuto, *Obrazovanie litovskogo gosudarstva*, Moskva, 1959; —, ed., *Gedimino laikai*, Vilnius, 1960; A. Gerulis, ed., *Lithuania 700 years*, New York, 1960.

GEDIMINAS' COLUMNS (Lith. *Gedimino stulpai*). A figure of seven straight lines representing a gate in a fortified wall of a castle or a city. Although this emblem first appeared on coins minted several decades after the death of Gediminas, it is believed to have been the symbol of sovereignty of Gediminas and his dynasty, but there is no actual proof that he ever used



Gediminas' Columns: 1—of a coin called *kapa*; 2—of Kestutis denar; 3—of Sigismund Augustus ducat, 4—of Lithuanian state seal (17th-18th centuries); 5—of a coin of Independent Lithuania (1925)

this emblem. It is known that at the time of Vytautas the Great, grandson of Gediminas, this emblem was used concurrently with *Vytis* (the Knight) (q.v.) as the national emblem of Lithuania. The Columns of Gediminas appear on the seals of Vytautas and of his cousin Švitrigaila and *Vytis* on their shields.

The name Columns of Gediminas is also mentioned in the 15th century legend about the Roman origin of Lithuanians. According to this legend Gediminas allegedly was a descendant of a Roman patrician family named Colona (or Columna), hence the name Columns of Gediminas (*Gedimino stulpai*). Actually the symbol is more closely associated with the gates of a city or castle, that is, with the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius, which was sometimes called the city of Gediminas; consequently the symbol is also referred to as the Gates of Gediminas (*Gedimino vartai*). Similar symbols were used by many West European cities and rulers on their coats-of-arms. The emblem of the gate also appears on the coat-of-arms of the city of Klaipėda.

In modern times the state banner of the Republic of Lithuania (see Flag) carried the Columns of Gediminas on its reverse, opposite *Vytis*, but it was not confirmed by law as the state emblem; its usage was based only on tradition. Many organizations had the Columns of Gediminas on their seals, letterheads, badges, decorative designs, etc. The emblem is widely used by emigrant Lithuanians, while it is forbidden in Lithuania under Soviet Russian rule.

A. V. S.

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[Page 105: II. COINS OF THE LITHUANIAN GRAND DUKES UP TO THE DEATH OF VYTAUTAS THE GREAT.]

[Page 106: "The Grand Duke trotted slowly through the gateway and motioned with his sword to the east..."]

1. The Political and Dynastic Legacy of Gediminas.

The 14th century is one of the most remarkable in the history of Lithuania. In that century Lithuania matured exceptionally. The reign of the Grand Duke developed new avenues. More and more of the adjoining territory, where the eastern Slavic tribes vegetated, were added to Lithuania. Some by methodical conquest, some by taking advantage of certain cooperative desires of the Slavs, as well as martial "unions" of Lithuanian and Slavic dukes. The exceptionally active and prominent dynasty of Gediminas predominated. The economy expanded vigorously throughout the land, the pulse of exchanges (trade) increased visibly. The moment had come to improve the tools of trade: money. The kapos, privately poured until then, began to show the stamp of Dukes. All types of specialists in economic life were invited into Lithuania from the west. Modern monies were placed in circulation: the coins of Lithuanian dukes...

Lithuanian leaders carefully moderate their course in a systematic statesmanlike line, with a much better understanding of what is wanted and what is sought. Their private interests were supplanted by a sound support of the state's needs. The local dukedoms, as branches of the central government increased. They gradually accepted "appointments" from the Grand Duke, and they became quite acceptable assistants in accomplishing his assigned tasks. The name of Lithuania daily rang louder beyond its borders. The wavelets of western civilization, one following the other, poured into Lithuania as a vast flood, breaking down here and there the barriers of "pagan conservatism," too long condoned. Strengthening herself, [Note: Lithuania is generally referred to with a male neuter: i.e the Fatherland] Lithuania undoubtedly prepared the destiny of the eastern Slavs, creating its own and their noble history, bound by common ties.

Some scholars of the middle ages, foreign to us, remember with envy and angrily characterize the military attacks of Lithuanians upon their neighbors' lands, calling it plunder. We do not, of course, contend that Lithuanians in the 13th century prepared "picnics" into their enemies' countries, while those enemies in their turn pillaged Lithuania. War is war. However, from the time of Mindaugas, in those Lithuanian forays a new purpose emerged. While not overlooking normal booty, the leaders of Lithuania began

to occupy the defeated territory, joining it to the body of its own territories, forcing the alien dukes and their subject peoples to obey the victors.

Though these foreign dukes were often satisfactory vassals in the occupied lands, Lithuanian leaders became dissatisfied with that state of affairs. They began to replace the foreign dukes with their own so, that the united lands would quickly and vigorously grow into the Lithuanian state. This policy was especially favored by Grand Duke Gediminas (born about 1280, died in the winter of 1341-42.) He was not as aggressive as some others, but with his rare wisdom and great diplomatic skill, he accomplished more for the Fatherland than all other leaders before him, taken together.

When he took over the government of the country from Vytenis in 1316, Gediminas found the Lithuanian state within the boundaries of Palanga-Minsk, Polock-Drogichin area. During the 25 years of his reign, he firmly consolidated the inherited lands and added or bound to Lithuania the land of Vitebsk, the dukedoms of Slutsk, Brasta [Brest-Litvosk, Litvosk meaning Lithuania; this by the way was the birthplace of that famous Lithuanian, Thaddeus Kosciuszko...], Pinsk, Turov and Volynia, up to the very source of the Bug River (with Lutsk and Zaslavl centers). The territory of Mindaugas [before Gediminas' time] grew from 200,000 sq. kilometers to about 350,000. There is more. Gediminas' political influence in the south and east reached much further. There are undoubted factors indicating that about 1320, far away Kiev came under Lithuania's control. Chernigov and Bryansk likewise were subservient to him. True, Lithuania's relations with states across the Dnieper river were loose, but whatever they were, they assisted Gediminas to maintain order closer in. In his maneuvers between the government of Pskov, in its struggle against the Livonian Order, Gediminas assured himself of the friendship of Pskov, where one of the Dukes (David) who had distinguished himself in Gediminas' service, was invited to rule. In 1326, Lithuanian envoys journeyed to Novograd, and improved Gediminas' relations, as he desired, with that Slavic region. The land of Smolensk finding itself within Gediminas' political sphere, willingly veered toward Lithuania.¹ In the conflict between the duke of Tver with Moscow, Gediminas supported Tver both politically and militarily, and attracted it to his side solidly. (Its Duke Dimitre in 1320, married Gediminas' daughter Maria). The ruling classes of the Ukraine elected Gediminas' son Luitbert as Duke of Galacia...

¹ Duke John of Smolensk, signing a treaty with the Livonian Order in 1339-40, publicly and without equivocation declared that he recognized the dominion of Lithuania "(Liv.-Est-u Kurlaendisches Urkundenbuch," II, 333.).

This gigantic expansion, the attraction by various ties to Lithuania of actually unoccupied Slavic states, testifies to Gediminas' wide vision. That his "empire" would remain stable and not fall at the slightest contrary wind, Gediminas used the strongest of political cement: wherever possible, he appointed his relatives or some deeply trusted person to dukedoms. This he accomplished by certain methods, which often the most successful were marriages between the Lithuanian dukes and princesses of the adopted countries, or vice versa.²

One of the most sensitive problems in those days was religion. In this respect, Gediminas was particularly tolerant. To illustrate: During the reign of Gediminas, Novograd was the See of the Metropolitan of the Eastern Church, while the ruler lived and died a pagan. Those Lithuanian dukes who were placed in eastern Slavic countries did not refrain from baptism in the eastern rite, and they were not forbidden to do so by Gediminas. In this manner, they acquired the respect of the local populace and their trust, and so let their roots sink even deeper. Thus, there is no call for surprise when we see further that the coins of the Lithuanian dukes destined for the Slavs, were struck with Slavic inscriptions, even with Slavic designs. Important ends justified all means...

There was no permanent capital before Gediminas. The center of government, as it was elsewhere, during the middle ages, was the person of the ruler. Where he was, there was his "capital." From there and to there, by ways known only to a few, the ruler's orders flowed and important news came to him. Gediminas himself was an unruffled ruler, controlling and augmenting his state more by diplomacy than by the sword. However, he understood well that military power was a necessary support to accomplish his ends. He sustained himself vigorously with that support. His sons commanded alert divisions of his troops, or else chosen leaders, experienced in battle, personally trustworthy (as for instance, David, the famous defender of Gardinas against the Crusaders, after he was commissioned by Gediminas to rule Pskov). Gediminas himself watched over the affairs of state from the center.

2.

For all this, those sections which were under the influence of Gediminas' rule became, as it were, a "federation" of dukedoms, and their local dukes reminds one of later governors. It appeared thus even to the Tatars, as the following example shows: Their Chan in 1325 gathered an army for an attack upon Lithuania, but that attack was begun not "against Lithuania," but "against Lithuanian dukes"... (Poln. Sobran. Russkich Letopisej," X, 189.).

According to the historian Paszkevicz, this growth of the Lithuanian state encouraged Gediminas to locate a permanent residence, to establish a capital in a more convenient place, from which it would be simpler to execute the weighty tasks of governor. Looking around for such a place, he stopped at one of the most beautiful locations in the Highlands (Augštaitija), where the Vilnia and Neris Rivers meet, between heaths and hills. There had been Lithuanian villages in the vicinity since the 5th and 6th centuries, and probably earlier. Not far away, at the junction of the two rivers, on the left branch of the Vilnia, on a hill completely surrounded by water (today, that branch is no longer to be found), Gediminas constructed a wooden castle³, and below, a residence, and moved there from Trakai (others say, from Kernavė) to dwell there permanently.

A town began to grow soon, around the ruler's castle, which today is called VILNIUS, though at the time, it was known as Vilnia. At what time Vilnius was designated the capital of Lithuania, we have no exact information. However, in 1323, Gediminas already resided in Vilnius, and from there he wrote his well-known letters to the west, clearly noting that these letters were "datum in civitate nostra Vilna (given or written in our city Vilnius). From that time, this city, growing in size, and renown, embraced within itself all the Lithuanian nation's activity, of policy, economy, and culture. It became the most famous settlement in the entire wide-spread state of Lithuania. On a Lithuanian map issued in 1613, it was described: "Vilnius--capital of the country, a large and famous city; together with its suburbs, it covers about 2 German miles. (1 Ger. mile: = 7,532 kilom.--J.K.K.), located at the juncture of the Neris and Vilnia Rivers. Of them, the one after which the city was named was the smaller. The second was the larger and was suitable for navigation." ("Vilnius," page 5)

Notwithstanding the events of passing ages, the storms, fires, epidemics, shorter or lengthier occupations, Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital established by Gediminas, still remains the dominating center of the Lithuanian nation, as it always has been. Lithuania without Vilnius, or Vilnius without Lithuania is entirely impossible to imagine. [This was why Lithuania and Poland were in a state of war during the 20th century; Poland broke its treaty and seized the Lithuanian capital, occupying it until Poland itself was defeated in 1939].

³This castle of Gediminas was destroyed by fire after several decades of years. In its place, a stone castle was built at the beginning of the 15th century by Vytautas the Great (its ruins even today entrance us with its massiveness). See Ed. Budreika's "Gediminas," western tower reconstruction, of the castle on the hill in Vilnius." See the Annual, I, Vilnius, 1958, Preservation and Inspection of State LTSR Architectural Monuments.

At his death, Gediminas left seven sons. Every one of them had a headquarters. Mantvydas ruled Kernavė and Slonim; Narimantas: Turova and at the end of Gediminas' life, according to Paszkevicz, even Polotsk. Karijotas: Novogrod and Volkovinsk. Algirdas: Kreva and Vitebsk. Keistutis: Gardinas, Trakai, the corridor with Poland and Brasta, and at his discretion, the semi-autonomous Lowlanders (Žemaičiai), so that he guarded Lithuania from the Crusaders [Teutonic Knights], together with a long flank alongside Poland. Liubartas governed Lutsk, and Volynia. Only the very youngest son, Jaunutis remained with his father in Vilnius, but at Gediminas' death, he automaticall became the Grand Duke of Lithuania, and began to fulfill his great father's duties.

However, the mitre of Gediminas proved too heavy for him, and the scepture too large. It soon became evident that he could not exert the same authority as his father. Having felt a weak hand in Vilnius, the Crusaders in the west reacted more banefully. Keistutis found himself without assistance from Vilnius. The Poles began to assault Liubartas in Volynia. The regional Lithuanian dukes began to feel irrepressible...Two elder brothers of Jaunutis, Algirdas and Keistutis, foresaw an imminent danger to the entire Grand Duchy. Without lengthy delay, they agreed to take the tiller of government into stronger hands. In 1345, Jaunutis was removed from Gediminas' throne and sent to a place more fitting to him, the dukedom of Zaslavlos, within the boundaries of the Vilnius region.

Although Keistutis played the largest part in this transition, and with his own command took over the capital, he did not relinquish his own territory, and left Vilnius in a fraternal spirit to his elder brother Algirdas. So Algirdas became the Grand Duke of Lithuania. From that time on, amity and cooperation between these two brothers had no bounds. They both joined in judging all important issues facing Lithuania, furnishing each other all types of needed assistance, and sent support, when it was requested to all their brothers. In their time, Lithuania was divided into two Duchies: for practical purposes: the eastern, which pertained to Algirdas; and the western, with Trakai, in which Keistutis was firm sovereign. Alongside Vilnius, the capital of the entire Grand Duchy, Trakai, the capital Keistutis, began to grow in distinction. An entire series of historical sources testify that the destiny of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at that time was controlled not by Algirdas alone by far, but in conjunction with Keistutis. The condominium (joint rule) of both brothers in Lithuania was an undisputed fact, for which we find support in an entire series of historical studies. So there is no occasion for surprise if foreigners, occasionally, were unable to grasp which of the two brothers was, in truth, the superior in the Grand Duchy.

In 1377, Algirdas died. At his plea, with the consent of Kęstutis, the Grand Duke of Lithuania became the son of Algirdas, Jogaila. The governmental ties maintained by Algirdas with the Duke of Trakai soon began fissure. Jogaila's ambition at times overcame his intellect. The guardian of all Lithuania's interests, Kęstutis, foresaw new dangers to the state. In 1381, he and his men suddenly took Vilnius, replaced Jogaila, and announced himself as Grand Duke. Alas, not for long: in the following year, beguiled by Jogaila and his crafty accessories into a clever trap, he was choked to death in the castle of Krevė. Kęstutis' son, Vytautas, caught together with his father, escaped from prison and fled to the Teutonic Knights.

Jogaila again occupied the throne of the Grand Duke in Vilnius.

— O —

2. The First Lithuanian Struck [Hammered] money: Coins.

a) Algirdas' "PEČAT" [Pechat]

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, at the time of Algirdas' and Kęstutis' fraternal cooperation, saw its largest expansion, with domestic tranquility unknown until then. The supreme control of all the country reposed in the firm hands of Algirdas, diplomat and warrior. On all sides a quiet tranquility was evident, a coordinated order. The keen attention of the ruler must reach the wide expanses of the east, leaving the problems of the west to that knowledgeable statesman and fighter, Kęstutis. Grand Duke Algirdas turned resolutely to the Slavs. His plans, in his own words, now were: all Russia must belong to Lithuania. To accomplish this, he strengthened persistently Lithuanian positions in the Slav land already occupied, and joined to the Grand Duchy even more of them, step by step. In his days, the Grand Duchy covered about 700,000 sq. kilometers of its own and of the protectorates and conquered lands. To more easily protect himself from Moscow's designs, attracting Lithuania's Slavs to its orbit, Algirdas procured their own religious hierarchy for the Slavs. At his request and with his assurances, the Patriarch of Constantinople appointed for the Lithuanian orthodox a Metropolitan of the eastern Church, independent of Moscow, who would be resident in Kiev, in the very historic center of Slavic Christianity's inception. Orthodox churches and monasteries grew like mushrooms in the Slavic lands of Algirdas, as they felt his tolerant patronage.

And in Vilnius itself, Algirdas permitted the investiture of churches and supported them, though he himself remained a pagan. It is characteristic that, placing affairs of state in the first rank, he was able to reconcile his own religious views as much with his first wife as with his second, both of whom were Russian-Christians. Those children of Algirdas who were born while he resided in Slavic territory (Vitebsk) were baptized with the rites of the Eastern Church. Those born in Lithuania (in Vilnius) were baptised as pagans, since all of old Lithuania was such, and Algirdas in this respect held to his own. It is notable that those children of Algirdas who grew up in Vilnius, though the mother was Russian (Juliana of Tverē) matured as Lithuanians (for example, Jogaila, Skirgaila, Švitrigaila).

But there is another side to the issue. As a result of Algirdas' unusually close attention to the east, and his boundless religious toleration, the greater part of his sons became russified. But that wasn't the worst consequence. Even though they sank in the sea of Slavism, they nevertheless worked for Lithuania, as their father desired. IT was even worse in the very court of the Grand Duke. There naturally began to crown in all types of Slavic councillors, invited and uninvited, high clerics, monks, popas, and with them the Slavic language and the Cyrillic alphabet strained to breach the gate. What all that meant to Lithuanian culture, it seems unnecessary to go into details...

However, the political and economic condition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania undoubtedly progressed. During the era of Algirdas-Kęstutis, that state grew even further into the east, expanded and strengthened. Improved internal security promoted conditions for increased economic benefits in the country, and their more equitable distribution. The state's foreign trade reached further and further, and not only with traditional western merchants, but even with more proficient eastern Slavs.

The combined Lithuanian-Slav state's internal commerce suffered for the want of a common currency, uniformly understood by all inhabitants and guaranteed by a clear mandate of the state. The silver kapos of the Lithuanians, and the Slavic grivnas and rubles, privately produced in most cases, could not be reconciled together, causing much concern to the people, as well as to the merchants and other buyers-sellers. Coins of foreign countries reaching us demonstrated the qualities of stable monies, but there were never enough of these coins to reach all sections of the widespread land and handle all transactions. And just then a rumor spread that Moscow, Algirdas' most dangerous antagonist-pretender for Lithuania's Slavic possessions, was preparing its own modern coins! Could Lithuania afford to concede?...In a word, all conditions were present to begin a new money era in the Grand Duchy, and Algirdas with the help of Kęstutis, embarked upon it.

All available facts indicate that these coins, astutely devised and planned for the Slavic sections of the Lithuanian state, and for native Lithuanians, were issued in the 6th decade of the 14th century [1360]. Both were of silver. On the coins issued by Algirdas, the obverse side bore the inscription in Cyrillic script, "PEČAT." Those of Kęstutis, the letter "K" in Gothic between the uprights of the portals [Columns of Gediminas symbol, as we know it today].⁴ Which of the two type coins first came under the hammer and which came later, no one knows.

⁴Any reproductions of "King Mindaugas" or "Žemaitia" (inscribed "Samogitia") coins on postcards, or described in any "pamphlets" for easy reading, are unknown to any numismatic scholars. No coins of "Mindaugas" or Samogitia have ever been found in any of the hoards (there are about 120 hoards known) registered, described, and examined containing ancient Lithuanian poured kapos and historical coins. (See G.B. Federov's "Topography of Hoards with Lithuanian pourings and coins."). [Karys makes this statement as a direct attack on the "scholarly" writings of Dr. Alexander M. Račkus, who perpetuated the Mindaugas & Samogitian coins on some of his publications.]

Probably both were struck and issued into circulation at the same time, which had been decided by both Grand Dukes.



Figure 28. The Oldest coins of Lithuania. a) with the Slavic inscription "PEČAT." b) With the letter "K" within Gediminas' symbol.

With the discovery of these coins centuries later, scholars became at odds. For example, T. Narbutas, and later the renowned numismatist E. Tiškevičius, contend that the oldest Lithuanian coin is that with the word "Pečat." L. Mikockis allots the first place to "Hercog Kęstutis" coins (with the letter "K."). There are more proponents on both sides. Dr. Gumowski at first agreed with Mikockis, but later deviated elsewhere. Since he considered the coin with the pečat to be a "half-grosh of Jogaila's day," struck by Vytautas at Lutsk or in Vilnius, not before 1399, this would place it much later than coins of other Lithuanian dukes.

We can see here easily an unpardonable error. We will see later that Vytautas, assuming the throne of Gediminas in 1392, "about 1399" struck very different coins, dissimilar both in appearance and technique from the pečat coins. And they were struck not for any one part of the huge Lithuanian state, as was the case for the Algirdas pečat, but for the entire territory, placing upon his coins not the archaic spearhead (as was placed on the reverse side of the pečats), but the newly created emblems used by grandfather Gediminas and father Kęstutis. In

addition, we note on all Vytautas' coins, on those earlier struck (at Lutsk) and on the later ones (struck when he was Grand Duke), the decimal system was strictly maintained, coordinated with the Prague grosh, well-established in the country. On the pečat coins, this element does not exist. Alas, this very significant fact was not noted by earlier students of Lithuanian coins, and of course they failed to give it proper consideration. If Kęstutis began to strike his coins at Trakai about 1360, as the latest Russian authors concede, how could Grand Duke Algirdas delay so?

We find other clearly misleading comments in foreign authors. However, to discuss them here would be useless. History records that Algirdas was the head of the Grand Duchy in those days. After the Vilnius reversal, Kęstutis conceded that position to Algirdas amicably, so that the latter, headquartered in Vilnius, could concentrate all his energies in the east, the better to govern the Slavic midland. Seeking success in the political field, Algirdas naturally concerned himself with the economic well being of his cherished Slavs. It was he who must counterbalance the designs of Moscow, to allure Lithuania's Slavs with enhanced progress, including also modernized monies. Furthermore, when the Algirdas-Kęstutis diarchy reached the point of striking its own money, the coins of Kęstutis (with pure Lithuanian symbols) could not satisfy either the entire country, or even both Grand Dukes who were cooperating so closely. So, such an enormous reform as the introduction of new money must have been presented only by agreement of both parties and satisfying both differing sections of the country. That is to say, if the coins with the letter "K" are Kęstutis' money (we will shortly explain this to be so), then the coins with the Slavic inscription pečat belong to Algirdas. The appearance of these two coins, in the described circumstances, cannot be separated by even a few years, not to speak of Gumowski's "1399."

Pechat means a seal. In this instance, the ruler's sign which says that this word or sign is given by the intention of the ruler, his authority and power. There is no doubt that Algirdas directed this to the Slavs, as a tradition accepted from antiquity. He well knew the habits of the eastern Slavs, for almost his entire life had been spent in the east, his youth in Vitebsk, later fighting with and controlling the Slavs as the authoritative ruler of Lithuania--in all the Slavic lands reached by the Lithuanians.

Both his wives, their entourage, and all sorts of advisors, all had their influence here. The Slavs subservient to Algirdas must have coins assigned to them which they could understand at once, and to which they would become accustomed most easily.⁵

Even the second Tiškevičius (Joseph), considered to be a well qualified archaeologist and numismatist, had reached the conclusion that the period at which the earliest Lithuanian coins appeared "must go much earlier than the times of Jogaila." That was the truth which Gumowski attempted unsuccessfully to disprove, but we, recognizing our past more clearly than a Pole, have accepted without doubting. It is just difficult to establish an approximated date, when those, our oldest coins, were first created. However, we received unexpected assistance from a corner we were unable to reach: from the USSR!

As far back as the old Czar's days in Russia, numismatic objects, documents relating to them, and literature on the subject from all sides was solicitously sought, gathered and studied. The coin collection at the Hermitage Museum in Petrograd was known as one of the most famous upon this earthly planet. So, availing himself of the compiled sources, and without a doubt, well examined findings, that distinguished Russian numismatist G.B. Fedorov found that Lithuanian coins with the inscription pechat were the very oldest, and appeared in circulation at the end of the 6th decade of the 14th century.⁷ Only after his story of historical personages he slipped: saying that the pechat coins were struck by Kęstutis in Trakai. Could this be a typesetters error of composition? Kęstutis would strike his coins in Trakai, but his coins were completely different, with Lithuanian symbols and the letter "K," which we will discuss elsewhere. If there is no error in Fedorov's text (Alas, there is no way we can ask him), then the introduction of Kęstutis into the emission of the pechat coins can testify only to our conviction that both Algirdas' and Kęstutis' coins appeared at about the same time.

⁵For this purpose, we do not doubt, the Cyrillic coin inscription had been selected. When we remember how Moscow coveted Lithuania's Slavs, this "slavophile" gesture of Algirdas should not surprise us. Finally, during the middle ages this was no precedent breaker. For example, in the 11th century, the Polish King Boleslav occupied Kiev and there was immediately issued his coins bearing inscriptions in the local language. Even in Poland itself, in areas thickly inhabited by foreign speaking peoples, coins were struck in the local dialect, some even with Hebrew legends, for jews in Uniezsne, where they were amassed.

⁶"Skorowidz monet litewskich," page 27.

⁷"Klassifikacija litovskich slitkov i monet" (Kratk. Soobšč XXIX, 1949); "Topography of Hoards with Lithuanian Poured Items and Coins," page 184.

Kęstutis ruled the western part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He participated in the affairs of the eastern part only as the closest advisor of Algirdas. Why then, should Kęstutis strike coins destined for the east, and under what title? That, it seems, is a clear misunderstanding. The headquarters of Grand Duke Algirdas was Vilnius, as we know. There he had a large staff of Slavic advisors, proficient writers and specialists of all kinds. From there had to issue, could issue, and did issue Algirdas' coins, typical of the Slavic spirit. Fedorov's "misprint" once again emphasizes how closely those two mighty brothers collaborated at the head of government, so that even today foreigners find it difficult to understand which was the supreme leader of Lithuania. Of course, it is a problem to identify Fedorov's censors. It may well be that they "crossed out" Algirdas, who was much disliked by Russians, having given them in his time many painful blows, and even on 3 occasions (in 1368, 1370, and 1372) attacked Moscow and burned it...

But Fedorov (and not the censors) did not mistake the time of the appearance of the pechat money. Here he, as is imperative to an objective student, marches on, giving precedence in time to Lithuania's coins, even before those of Moscow. As is undoubtedly clear, the earliest Moscow "dengas" were issued by Dmitri Donskoi. According to Schroetter, Dmitri's coins appeared not before 1362. František Kraumann carries their earliest date to 1382.⁸ So, at the best estimate, Moscow's "dengas" began to be struck several years later than the earliest Lithuanian coins.

The coins shown here are from several hoards, in which nearly 100 specimens were found. The hoards were found near Lyda, Berdičev, Vokė (near Vilnius), Pulganov, Trembovle, Vitebsk, Šančiai (near Kaunas). On one side we find Cyrillic characters in one word, PECHAT. On the reverse, an archaic symbol of Lithuania's government and might: the spearhead (the sharp end, in earliest antiquity, it was of stone, then bone, later produced from metal). Next to the "government symbol" was a Greek cross. We also noted some specks or dots of unknown meaning. The inscriptions on the finds vary in 3 ways: PČAT (and reverse as TAČP), PEČAT (our "j" in place of the Russian softening symbol). The variety in the inscriptions on the coins shows two basic facts: 1) A very hard beginning, and 2) the coins were produced (and improved) over a long time.



Figure 29. Grand Duke Algirdas seal with Slavic inscriptions "PECAT KNIAZIA VELIKAGO OLGER;" 1 to 3: Algirdas' coins; x-x, sketches of both sides of the coins.

The crosses on Algirdas' coins should not necessarily be considered an indication of "Christianity." Of course, it could have also been so intended, since the eastern Slavs, for whom these coins were originally intended, had been Christians for a long time (they began to be baptized from the end of the 10th century); but since they were members of the eastern church, whose sacred cross consists of two crosspieces through the upright pole, [†] it is entirely possible that in placing the Greek Cross upon his coins, Algirdas accomplished two ends at one time. He acceded thus to their religious feelings, very clearly circumscribed his coins from those of the Tatars already circulating among his Slavs, and at the same time conformed to the decadent prevailing traditions of the middle ages. In truth, it would be difficult to find any seal or coin of a ruler in those days without a conforming cross (on coins, this tradition has lasted until today, as can be seen, albeit rarely, upon the coins of Great Britain). How the fever on this subject covered all of Europe can be seen pictured, for example, upon ancient Polish coins (Mieško, Boleslav, and others.) They are full not only of crosses, but often are struck with entire chapels engraved. And our own Kęstutis, never a Christian, graced his seal with the cross (in the middle of the 14th century (See Figure 30). Who would venture to accuse

this valiant knight of hypocrisy? Placing upon his seal a cross, Kęstutis was not about to portray himself as other than what he was. But since other Grand Dukes employed that symbol, why shouldn't he do the same? Was he in any way a worsser Grand Duke?



Figure 30. The seal of Kęstutis, in use about the middle of the 14th century (K. Sochaniewicz: "Pieczęć Keijstuta..", Wiadom. Numizmat.-Archeolog. 1928/29).

Findings have disclosed two sizes of the pechat type of coins: one of them, according to Iljin, weighs about 0.93-1.3 grms. each. The other, between 0.59-0.81 grms. Some writers assign the larger coins to Kęstutis, the smaller to Vytautas (the writers include Iljin and Fedorov). Gumowski attributes them all to Vytautas. We have already expressed our opinion of the intermingling here of Kęstutis. As regards Vytautas (and even of Jogaila,) we will speak later in the appropriate place. It will then become clear in what respect the name authors are correct, and where they are incorrect. All we can say here is that the smaller pechat coins are not Algirdas to our knowledge.

[Illustrations from the Encyclopedia Lituanica. Left: map showing the western portion of vast Lithuania which was ruled by Kęstutis. Right: portrait of Kęstutis.]



Grand Prince Kęstutis by Moritz Retzsch 1879-1887.

The average weight of Algirdas' pechat coins, is about 1 gram. The purity: most often about 0.900 (a lower silver content is sometimes found, but not often). Such high content reminds one of the close resemblance to the poured kapos, and to the metal of the early Prague grosh metal. It is entirely possible that the very first coins of Algirdas were struck directly from those same kapos, cutting them into proper planchet size and placing them under the hammer. The diameter of the coins, understandably somewhat flattened out, would not contradict that assumption. The variance of the weight as between various coins is rather large, but that also is a relevant factor testifying to the comparative antiquity of the coins. Later Lithuanian coins are somewhat better controlled in weight. Algirdas' money must have had a very hard beginning.

From a technical standpoint, the pechat coins belong in the category of most primitive coins. In the opinion of the wavering Dr. Gumowski, their striking technique is different from later Lithuanian coins. The inscribed side is somewhat sunken concave. The symbol side is convex. The coins of Bizantium are similarly struck. This means that the "pechat" coins must have been produced by eastern masters, whose teachers had to be from Bizantium. But if these coins had been by Vytautas, and produced in 1399 or later (as it appears to Gumowski), then why are all other coins of his, struck in Lithuania, entirely different? Are we to believe that Vytautas had two mints in Vilnius, when in those days it was difficult to staff one? No, those coins do not pertain to Vytautas.⁹

How much was Algirdas' pechat worth, compared with other species? The poured silver small kapa weighted about 100 grams. If the pechat weighed an average of 1 gram, then 100 of those coins would equal one small kapa. Or one coin would equal 0.01 of a kapa. In those days the Prague groshes still circulated in Lithuania. We explained elsewhere that this related to the coins of John I, and his son Karl! Their legal weight reached 3 grams, the fineness varied from 0.883 to 0.825. In a word, there had to be about

⁹About 1395, Vytautas began to strike coins for the entire Grand Duchy with Slavic inscriptions (See page 162). He struck them "in 1399 or later," but those coins do not resemble the pechat coins. All Vytautas' coins substantially and nominally are based upon the decimal system. The pechat coins are far from that system. As we shall soon see, it related to the poured Lithuanian silver kapos, and not to the Prague groshes, which at all times were the unquestioned standard of Vytautas' coins, a "basic unit" so to speak.

2.56 grms. pure silver in 1 grosh, that is, about 0.7 gr too much for two pechat coins, and too little for three. With such a distinction at hand, we are compelled to believe that Algirdas did not conform his coins to the Prague groshes. However, one's own coins are always evaluated at home higher than those of foreign origin, so when faced with a grosh, they could have been offered at two pečats for 1 grosh. In this respect, Gumowski may be correct, as he values the pechat coin a Lithuanian "half-grosh," even though the name is inapplicable.

The pechat coins had no special purely Lithuanian name. They were nicknamed "half-groshes" because of that circumstance, and of course, loosely. Adroit merchants could have invented the name pechat, but we have no clear indication about this. In the colloquial language of the people, those early coins of our Grand Dukes were denominated "money" (pinigai) or "small change" (pinigėliai). The Slavs called them "dengi," just as they did the soon-to-be issued Moscow coins ("denga" comes from the Turkish "tanga," the Mongolian "tengah," which is to say, symbol, money, coin).

The approved names in Lithuanian were money, monies, and small change, and had been common even back in the days of pelt "money." It comes from the German. There the "forefather" of these words, time and country as applicable, was spoken and written: penig, pening, pending, pennic and the like,¹¹ until the modern pfennig developed much later (0.01 mark). In the Anglo-Saxon language, penig, pening, pending ended with the word penny used today in Great Britain. From these same etymological sources the Slavic "pi-eniqdz" and "peniaz" are derived.

¹⁰From Slavic sources, "peniaz," "pieniadz," "Pieniažek." (cash or down payment). As he transferred Polotski to Skirgaila, Jogaila admonished his brother that St. John's Russian Church in Logaisk should not suffer even "by one money." (Gumowski, "Numizmat. Lit." page 41). Jogaila also calls other coins used at that time in Lithuania "money" (peniazi)". See page 189. Until other names became popular in Lithuania, all small coins in Lithuania were called "pinigėliais" (little monies), and in the White Russian, "peniazi." (Historical Archives, I, 556). That continued until the 16th century. Larger coins occasionally appear in the documents as "large money" (Historical sources, I, 152). T Čacki still calls the small 2 denar coin of Batory in the 19th century as "pieniažek," "small change." (Zbior 14 tablic).

¹¹H. Halke, "Handwoertenbuch der Muenzkunde" Berlin, 1900.

b) Concerning coins Types "K" and "V"

In 1844, in Kaunas, a hoard of ancient coins was discovered, upon which the obverse bore the Columns of Gediminas; (Mast Portals) on the reverse a jogging rider from the right (in heraldry, "left"). In the central square between the columns could be seen the letter "K". Studies began. The heraldic symbol showed that these coins, without a doubt, were Lithuanian: everyone agreed that [surprise!] But wide disagreement arose as to the meaning of the "K." One faction urged that the letter "K" meant the name of Kęstutis. A second faction contended for "Kniaz" (meaning "Grand Duke"). A third went for Kaunas. Finally, the outstanding legatee of our older numismatic traducers, Marion Gumowski, elected for "Kaunas," though earlier (in his book issued in 1914) even he acknowledge that the letter stood for Kęstutis, and not Kaunas.¹² In changing his opinion to Kaunas, our modern Polish patriot did not reveal the truth, as we shall see, but consciously or unconsciously diverted the entire discussion into different avenues: The cited coins were not those of Kęstutis, the beloved hero of all Lithuanians. The time they were struck, and therefore the beginning of Lithuanian civilization in this respect, was retarded at least several decades later (until Jogaila, Deified by the Poles, would come up with the "first" Lithuanian money). [The politics of the Slavs, in this case the Poles, have throughout history attempted to degrade and lessen, undermine, and replace the superiority of the Lithuanian history with their own; as Marys is making the point here, this is just another case of many in Lithuanian numismatics as seen through foreign eyes]. Coins with the letter "K" to Gumowski are considered Vytautas' coins, and they were originally struck "not earlier than 1390", and of course, in Kaunas (which is to say at that very time, when Vytautas was "visiting" with the Teutonic Knights for the second time.

How far from the truth!

In the first place, these coins were not properly deciphered by scholars, and were consequently described erroneously. For example, the symbol of Gediminas was inscribed on these coins, as been established beyond doubt, with the letter "K", and also in varieties, with the letter "V." Even in the Kaunas hoard there was no single type of coin, and even earlier students noticed this in pausing, but they confused the letter with a "B", "R", "O". On some of these coins, someone noted the letter "L" above the Gediminas symbol. Stročinski combined it with the symbol's middle pole, making of the Columns of Gediminas "two poles at the top." To Mankowski

¹²In his "Podrecznik Numizmatyki Polskiej," page 39, he says: "Kęstutis was the first to strike Lithuanian coins, who also strove to inculcate other evidences of civilization in Lithuania. He also was the one who inaugurated (ustalil) coat of arms on his coins: the Lithuanian knight and the "Columns of Gediminas" (Kolumny Giedyminowiczow).

and E. Tiškevičius the "L" seemed to be a J. Gumowski turned the "L" into "V," but at the same time concedes that it could be part of the letter "K"...In some specimens of this coin, earlier numismatists found certain kinds of signs, struck under the Columns of Gediminas symbol. But unable to interpret those signs, made of it another "K", though that is just more nonsense, just as one of our own "numismatists" [i.e. the late Dr. Alexander M. Račkus] found in these historical Lithuanian coins, "the symbol of God's moon."



Figure 31. Photographs. a) [left] type K coins. b) [right] type V coins. c-d) Enlargements of obverse of both designs.

With disagreements and discussions further progressing, Wytzig and Teichman entered the controversy, with the statement that in these pictured coins, the central letters were "K," and "O." They seemed to these authors to convey the names of Kęstutis and Algirdas.¹³ Iljin expressed the opinion that coins with "K" could have been that of Kazimiero, son of Jogaila (this author erroneously calls him the son of Zigmantas).¹⁴ We haven't the slightest indication that Kazimier would have struck any kind of coin in Lithuania. But if the type "K" coins belong to Kazimier, then whose would those coins, similar to the foregoing, be with another letter in its center? Iljin does not attempt to answer this. Equally does Gumowski avoid the second letter [V] as though it did not exist, though that letter is destined to explain everything concerning the coin.

¹³"Zapiski Numizmatyczne," Crakow, 1884.

¹⁴A.A. Iljin: "Klassifikacija russkich udelnych monet," Leningrad, 1940.

But beyond this, the rationale of Gumowski concerning the locale of this coin's striking sounds unreasonable. Ignoring the other letter in the clearly "sister" coins in the early findings, he expresses himself about the Kaunas hoard thus: "That these coins were native to Kaunas we are convinced not only by that letter [K] , but by the first kaunas excavations which brought those coins into the light of day...."¹⁵ That is humor, of course. From such rationale it could follow that the Coin Mint, having produced the coins, buried them here at once, so when they were found, Mr. Gumowski would know where they were struck...But the purpose of all money was and continues to be: circulation. And certainly not burial in the ground. If Roman, Greek, Arabian and Czech coins could have traveled even into Lithuania, why should Lithuanian coins circulate only in the near vicinity of the "Kaunas Mint," and be buried there? It was not the intention of the Mint to bury them, but of isolated individuals, of hoarders, misers and other persons who consciously buried them, or lost them. We should not even have to discuss that aspect.

We should take this opportunity to question a hypothetical "basis" adopted by many numismatists upon which they like to rest in establishing the "true finding time of undated coins," from other dated numismatic objects found in the same hoard. Ordinarily, they reason thus: coins, upon which there are no dates struck, will have been issued by their Mint at about the same time, as finds located in the same hoard. Alas, that is not an axiom, nor even a well-supported premise. It is possible, of course, that such a concurrence could happen, but that "could" is not assurance. And for such a premise, this is a very poor situation, since logic immediately offers another undisputed possibility: some of the oldest coins could have gone into the ground together with the newest. That is to say, how did it happen, with which coins? Before burying them in the ground, were they gathered together in one "money bag?" Some of them could have been saved by the grandparents, passed into the hands of several generations. Others could have been added by distant grandchildren, and only then hidden or lost.

Let us return to the unusually complicated problem of the script on our coins. It is a matter of regret that the issuers of the early Lithuanian coins failed to inscribe complete legends on these coins. It appears that they did not dream of us,

¹⁵"Numizmatyka Litewska," page 49.

after 500 or 600 years, with so many problems...But to be reasonable, there was not room enough upon a small silver circle to place entire words. The coiners of those ages were not the specialists of today. They were unable to write small. On most early coins, they were most often satisfied to place the government's insignia and one or two letters (at times, a lone word), which to the appropriate public did not present difficulties. The inscribed words, as a rule, related to the king, ruler, or duke's name. They were usually placed in the very center of the coin, or in some other place of distinction, if the center was occupied by the design.

Of course, Algirdas did not even place the initial of his name upon his coins. But that was because of certain special circumstances: That diplomatic ruler most likely did not desire to demonstrate to each inhabitant of his wide Slavic acres, that lo and behold, they are now ruled not by any Cyril, Nikita or Popov, but by a Grand Duke of the tiny Lithuanian nation. But normally, it is difficult to find another ruler of that period who would not have included at least the first letter of his name upon his coins. Since Gumowski, a Pole, has insisted that the letter "K" upon Lithuanian coins does not depict the name Kęstutis, but of Kaunas, then we must show examples from historical monies of his own Polish rulers! Following are photos to prove our point!:



Figure 32. Polish coins bearing initials of the ruler's names:
a) Louis of Hungary, b) Kazimier, c) Wenceslaus Opolski, d)
Semovitu of Masuria, e) Hedwig, f) Wenceslaus (Jogaila).

If Louis placed upon his coins his name's initial "L," Kazimier "K", Wenceslaus "W" Semovits "S", Queen Jadvyga "H" (from Hedwig), then why should the existing letter for the ruler's name on his coins be categorically ruled out? It is queer and not reasonable. The "W" of the Cracow coins of Jogaila stood for Wenceslaus (or Vladislav, the Christian name of Jogaila). As we shall see, the "A" on Alexander's Lithuanian coins meant Alexander. The "SA" on Sigismundus Augustus' coins clearly referred to him. And Stephen Batory's Lithuanian coins contained an "S", as did those of Žygimantas Vasa. Even John Kazimier didn't fail to place upon his Lithuanian coins his initials "JC" (for Joannes Casimirus). The gold coin "Noble" was struck from the 14th century with the initials of the rulers of England: "E" (Edward,) "R" for Richard, "H" for Henry; letters with the same meaning can be observed on French coins of the 15th century, etc. But the coins found in the Kaunas hoard bearing the initial "K" "is not that of the ruler...(sic)."

The initials of the mint cities on coins, where they appear, are classified into a lower category of inscriptions. They are hidden on the face of coins, along with initials of the masters of the mint, serial numbers or other symbols on coins. Even the novice collector of coins knows that these secondary initials or symbols do not dominate the general outline, because they are microscopic and are placed away from the center. Often, they are not even seen at first glance. Let us glance for example, at Sigismundus the Elder's half-grosches, or the 3 grosches of Sigismundus III, or John Kazimier's "baratinkas." There we must search for the initial "V" of the Vilnius mint, the initials of the mint officials and the series notations, in the general field of the coins.

Dr. Gumowski's attempt to transpose to "Kaunas" the letter "K" found on these Lithuanian coins does not assist in explaining those coins but rather seriously impedes the effort. And for that matter, what about Kaunas itself? In 1390, Kaunas was not a "large commercial center," as that same Gumowski says, trying to bolster his "theory" of these coins. He most likely has been misled by a purported account of a trip into Lithuania, pieced together by some Polish romanticists, which the Commandant of Elbing, von Kyburg, is said to have made in 1397. In that account, in addition to other fantasies of the middle ages, it was noted that in the old castle of Kaunas at that time, there could have been 4000 people. However, in a volume by P. Karge, "Gesandtschaftsbericht des Ordenssplitters Grafen Konrad von Kyburg vom Jahre 1397--eine polnisch Faelschung," shows that this "narrative of Kyburg's journey"

is a complete fabrication, and that Kaunas' castle could have accommodated only about 400 people,"¹⁶ at that time.

So, in those days, the city of Kaunas could have not been large, a castle constantly attacked by the Teutonic Knights, who finally demolished it in 1362. Afterwards, Lithuanians there built themselves the so-called "New Castle of Kaunas," but that also was destroyed by the Knights in 1368. In its place, they built for themselves the next year, Gottesverder, which in its turn was captured by Kęstutis. The Order recaptured Gottesverder, but it was burned by Vytautas (as he fled the Order for the first time). In 1377, a massive onslaught by the Knights devastated the entire west of Lithuania, reaching as far as Vilnius and Trakai.

Under such circumstances, when did Kaunas have the opportunity to grow and expand into a "large commercial center?" It is most doubtful that many brave merchants would lightly risk their capital and their lives with such a country and so much danger. Beyond that, Vytautas is the first Lithuanian leader to support Kaunas not only as a castle, but equally as a civic center, as he did so after he had established himself firmly in Vilnius as the Grand Duke. Kaunas revived, began to build and become a city only after Vytautas concluded peace at Salinas with the Teutonic Knights. The Salinas treaty prepared the way for German merchants to live in Kaunas, and it became somewhat of a commercial center only after the battle of Tannenberg (Žalgiris), when the Teutonic Knights were "pacified," and their constant threat to Kaunas abolished. Then this city really began to grow into a commercial city. Offices of Hanseatic merchants were established. And to augment the number of inhabitants, Vytautas sent there refugees or captives, even Tatars and Caraimus. Vytautas accorded privileges of a city to Kaunas only on February 14, 1408, or perhaps even later, since this date is based upon an uncertain copy of privileges granted, while really large center of Lithuania already enjoyed these privileges: Vilnius, from 1387; Brasta, from 1380, Trakai, from 1391. Because of its long agony in the throes of war, Kaunas was far behind Vilnius not only in housing, inhabitants and all types of wealth. That same is evidenced even a century and a half later (1551) by a schedule composed of "silver" taxes, according to which Vilnius was required to pay 500 "kapos-groshes," while Kaunas was taxed only 100: barely a fifth as much.

Most important, and an item that proponents of the "Kaunas Money Mint" forget, is the stern historical fact that from 1390 to 1392, at

¹⁶Karge's article appeared in 1918 in the "Altpreussische Monatschrift." V. Biržiška commented upon it in his "History of Ancient Lithuanian Books," page 44 and elsewhere

a period when Vytautas was purportedly striking his money in Kaunas, that Lithuanian leader was an inmate of the Teutonic Knights, having several times slipped his head out of Jogaila's noose. He was housed and, understandably, guarded not in Kaunas but in Kittersverder, on the Nevežis river from whence he returned to Lithuania in 1392. Obviously, residing in Kittersverder during 1390 to 1392, he could not strike any coins in Kaunas.

And he did not strike any. Needing money to fight for his inheritance from Gediminas, he borrowed from those same Teutonic Knights: from certain sources it becomes evident that Master Konrad von Rottenstein loaned Vytautas 1,000 marks on one occasion "bereits Geldis prussischer muncze" (Prussian coins).¹⁷ Since Vytautas' fight against Jogaila furthered certain of their interests, they supported Vytautas even in other ways. He had neither time, nor the silver to strike his own coins at this time.

There is a basis for discussing only two types of coins: "K" and "V," contained in the Kaunas hoard and later findings. The initials show them to be from two separate issues. To properly explain these two types, which have been quite thoroughly confused by traditional scholars, two newly discovered hoards have performed a gigantic task. They were described by Paul Karazija, a co-worker of the Vytautas the Great Cultural Museum.¹⁸ Photographs of the newly found coins published concurrently dissolve all doubts as to what was really being struck on those coins.

The hoards examined by Karazija were discovered in 1929 and 1930. The first of them was dug out of the ground in a clay pot between Aluona-Šklėriai villages, County of Rud-iškė, about 9 kilometers from Old Trakai and about 10 kilometers from New Trakai. 200 coins were found in the pot. A second and even more bountiful hoard turned up in Krūminiai Village, Valkininkai County. 253 coins from both hoards and 22 Prague groshes (14th century) found at the same time came into Karazija's hands. All these findings were weighed, measured and their chemical composition determined. The lightest specimen weighed about 0.3 gr. The heaviest: 0.64 gr. Such a large variance in weight gives reason for concluding that these coins belong at the very beginning of the national Lithuanian coinage. Coins struck later do not vary so greatly in weight.

¹⁷"Codex Epist. Vitoldi," LXX.

¹⁸"Aluonos Škerių and Krūminių Hoards" (V.D. Kult. Muzieum Annual I, Kaunas, 1941).

Karazija computed the average weight of these coins by weighing the coins separately, arranging them into groups and adding 1, 5, 8% to the metal to replace the wear in circulation. In this manner, he found that each coin originally weighed on average about 0.44 gr. Having examined some of these very worn specimens and having in mind their wildly unequal diameters, one comes to the conclusion that Karazija's "visually" estimated wear on the coins percentage-wise is not sufficient. It would seem that the majority of the very worn coins have lost at least 10% and more of their original metal (after lying in the ground for centuries). With this correction, and joining together an entire series of specimens found earlier, we can confidently state that the average weight of the coins in question would have been in the vicinity of 0.5 grams. We will accept that weight for further study. Especially since these discovered coins, in general, are not the very heaviest. It has become sufficiently obvious to numismatic scholars that at the time a certain "thievery" was practiced. Experts would select the heavier coins immediately upon issue and would melt them down in private silver melting furnaces. This type of "operation" could have begun even in the Mint itself.¹⁹ We will not err greatly in assuming that coins found in the hoards are not among the very heaviest...

The silver content likewise varies. According to the analyses made in the V.D. University technical laboratory and the Assay office, in 13 coins examined, there was found from 0.420 to 0.519 pure silver. The basic bond: copper. "We will not stray far from the truth, if we concede that these described coins were theoretically struck of 0.500 silver content, and even a bit higher," said Karazija. There is no reason why this conclusion cannot be accepted.

It is most regrettable that Paul Karazija did not endeavor to describe these hoards with full numismatic precision. My own notes were naturally lost during the war years. In reading Karazija's treatise, we note that he did not separate these coins into their basic types, following their distinguishing marks. The central letters "K" and "V," because without a doubt therein lies the difference between the two. In truth, he recognized the type "K", but it seems Karazija had his doubts, as did the elder writers, about the "V." Placing all coins from both hoards in one group, he looked

¹⁹Dr. Von Ebengreuth discusses this matter in his volume "Allgemeine Muenzkunde u. Geldgeschichte des Mittelalters u. der neuern Zeit" page 113 and elsewhere.